



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Mick Zais
Superintendent

1429 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

July 7, 2014

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Wheeler, Commissioner Clyburn, Commissioner O'Rielly,
Commissioner Rosenworcel, and Commissioner Pai:

The purpose of this letter is to encourage you to act swiftly on the proposal before you to modernize the E-rate program and ensure that all students in South Carolina are able to benefit from robust broadband access in their schools and classrooms.

I support the major elements of Chairman Wheeler's proposed plan as an important first step in E-rate modernization because the proposal:

- Helps address the problem of inequitable access to educational opportunity in a digital age by better targeting program funds to technologies and services directly related to teaching and learning.
- Dramatically increases investment in broadband access in and throughout schools and classrooms in South Carolina. According to the FCC's July 1, 2014 paper entitled "Modernizing E-Rate: Providing 21st Century Wi-Fi Networks For Schools and Libraries across America," 1,032 South Carolina schools will reap the benefits of E-rate investment for the first time in at least the past five years.
- Supports long-term planning for digital learning by increasing the certainty of year-over-year support under E-rate for Wi-Fi and related services.
- Simplifies the E-rate application process and generates information to support future decision making by increasing the transparency of program operations.

It is time to modernize the E-rate program, and I encourage you to continue with your deliberations. South Carolina children deserve nothing less.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mick Zais".

Mick Zais, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education